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Texas Agricultural Extension Service

Understanding Your Local Economy: Commuting Dollar Flows in Texas Counties

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In many Texas counties, commuting has a substantial influence on dollar flows into and out of the local economy. Acquiring an understanding of existing dollar flows is essential to enhancing local economic conditions.

Commuting dollar flows are generated when residents of one local economy are employed in another local economy. Income earned in the place of employment can "commute" to the place of residence. Relatively large commuting dollar flows compared to other types of economic activity present a substantial challenge and opportunity for both the place of employment and the place of residence. The place of employment has the challenge of extracting the maximum economic benefit possible from these dollars before they leave the local economy. The place of residence seeks to attract expenditures in that marketplace.

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The total dollar amount and potential impact on the local economy can be significant. To assist local economies in evaluating this aspect of their economic situation, estimates of commuting dollar flows for Texas counties are presented in the table on the next page.

Since dollars can flow into and out of a local economy as people commute in both directions, an estimate of the net result has been calculated. A negative amount indicates a net outflow of dollars from the county, while a positive figure indicates a net inflow. Note that for many counties the commuting dollar flows are substantial, with some counties showing figures in the billions.

Since dollars can flow into and out of a local economy as people commute in both directions, an estimate of the net result has been calculated.

Commuting dollar flows should be assessed relative to other types of economic activity in the county. To accomplish this, commuting dollar flows have been calculated as a percentage of total income earned in the county. A negative figure represents income earned by residents of another county. A positive figure reflects income that the county residents earn in another county. In general, these percentages indicate the increase or decrease in county income attributable to commuting.

Counties can utilize this data to evaluate the feasibility and potential benefits of economic development efforts focusing on commuting dollar flows in their local economy.

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Commuting Dollar Flows*

County	Net ($1,000)	% of Income
ANDERSON	6,159	1
ANDREWS	963	0
ANGELINA	-33,400	-4
ARANSAS	27,365	15
ARCHER	30,144	35
ARMSTRONG	7,225	26
ATASCOSA	68,106	30
AUSTIN	45,938	17
BAILEY	659	1
BANDERA	40,603	47
BASTROP	124,099	47
BAYLOR	247	0
BEE	4,182	2
BELL	-307,242	-12
BEXAR	-634,668	-4
BLANCO	9,055	13
BORDEN	1,138	10
BOSQUE	21,454	13
BOWIE	-47,353	-4
BRAZORIA	386,146	17
BRAZOS	-24,491	-2
BREWSTER	-4,039	-5
BRISCOE	259	1
BROOKS	-1,224	-2
BROWN	-5,908	-1
BURLESON	18,409	15
BURNET	11,061	3
CALDWELL	57,977	25
CALHOUN	-71,062	-23
CALLAHAN	43,866	46
CAMERON	-24,015	-1
CAMP	19,241	16
CARSON	-68,955	-39
CASS	39,526	13
CASTRO	-519	-1
CHAMBERS	-18,906	-7
CHEROKEE	29,297	6
CHILDRESS	-785	-1
CLAY	33,814	37
COCHRAN	0	0
COKE	3,219	8
COLEMAN	5,440	5
COLLIN	1,885,498	89
COLLINGSWORTH	1,392	3
COLORADO	3,645	1
COMAL	166,459	28
COMANCHE	8,088	5
CONCHO	2,761	8
COOKE	-3,523	-1
CORYELL	314,983	103
COTTLE	273	1
CRANE	-4,318	-6
CROCKETT	-1,499	-2
CROSBY	1,015	1
CULBERSON	-11,393	-25
DALLAM	-11,599	-13
DALLAS	-7,465,890	-18
DAWSON	1,129	1
DEAF SMITH	-13,081	-5
DELTA	12,416	31
DENTON	1,719,839	87
DE WITT	-2,431	-1
DICKENS	-263	-1
DIMMIT	-3,282	-4
DONLEY	824	2
DUVAL	-401	-0
EASTLAND	597	0
ECTOR	47,742	3
EDWARDS	-469	-2
ELLIS	278,954	36
EL PASO	-164,569	-3
ERATH	9,447	3
FALLS	21,284	13
FANNIN	49,264	21
FAYETTE	-9,061	-3
FISHER	1,214	2
FLOYD	-103	-0
FOARD	1,523	6
FORT BEND	1,359,835	85
FRANKLIN	30,025	46
FREESTONE	-1,375	-1
FRIO	5,151	5
GAINES	5,432	4
GALVESTON	488,646	19
GARZA	-1,804	-3
GILLESPIE	9,391	4
GLASSCOCK	1,048	5
GOLIAD	11,470	20
GONZALES	5,914	3
GRAY	60	0
GRAYSON	1,799	0
GREGG	-153,617	-9
GRIMES	-1,692	-1
GUADALUPE	170,225	31
HALE	979	0
HALL	-280	-0
HAMILTON	6,788	7
HANSFORD	-2,622	-2
HARDEMAN	-1,742	-2
HARDIN	144,022	40
HARRIS	-3,576,883	-7
HARRISON	-4,786	-1
HARTLEY	9,621	20
HASKELL	130	0
HAYS	184,850	36
HEMPHILL	-1,401	-2
HENDERSON	138,737	28
HIDALGO	-20,798	-1
HILL	36,125	13
HOCKLEY	5,211	2
HOOD	141,774	56
HOPKINS	6,698	2
HOUSTON	-8,414	-3
HOWARD	-507	-0
HUDSPETH	-1,541	-5
HUNT	85,063	11
HUTCHINSON	-13,458	-3
IRION	5,468	23
JACK	4,455	5
JACKSON	20,587	14
JASPER	12,434	4
JEFF DAVIS	444	2
JEFFERSON	-371,226	-10
JIM HOGG	5,826	13
JIM WELLS	13,140	4
JOHNSON	428,743	56
JONES	30,609	16
KARNES	3,513	3
KAUFMAN	190,639	38
KENDALL	65,555	37
KENEDY	-1,521	-16
KENT	138	1
KERR	-6,646	-1
KIMBLE	1,637	3
KING	-1,201	-27
KINNEY	442	2
KLEBERG	26,968	8
KNOX	1,414	2
LAMAR	-13,000	-2
LAMB	5,560	2
LAMPASAS	32,654	26
LA SALLE	1,456	4
LAVACA	13,312	6
LEE	6,658	4
LEON	1,721	1
LIBERTY	135,860	29
LIMESTONE	-13,620	-5
LIPSCOMB	3,363	7
LIVE OAK	13,907	15
LLANO	11,327	6
LOVING	-351	-13
LUBBOCK	-23,704	-1
LYNN	4,416	6
MCCULLOCH	-280	-0
MCLENNAN	-30,482	-1
MCMULLEN	-426	-3
MADISON	-4,998	-4
MARION	20,199	28
MARTIN	3,657	6
MASON	-84	-0
MATAGORDA	-77,172	-10
MAVERICK	2,078	1
MEDINA	63,764	29
MENARD	857	3
MIDLAND	-67,283	-3
MILAM	-11,230	-4
MILLS	2,434	4
MITCHELL	2,711	3
MONTAGUE	11,920	6
MONTGOMERY	854,237	61
MOORE	-12,933	-5
MORRIS	-34,134	-17
MOTLEY	0	0
NACOGDOCHES	14,197	2
NAVARRO	17,870	4
NEWTON	27,616	31
NOLAN	-3,615	-2
NUECES	-224,295	-6
OCHILTREE	-2,661	-2
OLDHAM	-1,253	-3
ORANGE	162,998	19
PALO PINTO	37,070	14
PANOLA	18,597	7
PARKER	338,662	74
PARMER	-17,434	-10
PECOS	-11,345	-7
POLK	13,914	5
POTTER	-562,110	-29
PRESIDIO	1,454	3
RAINS	16,631	30
RANDALL	621,927	83
REAGAN	1,213	2
REAL	1,244	4
RED RIVER	16,687	12
REEVES	8,890	7
REFUGIO	6,132	5
ROBERTS	-712	-5
ROBERTSON	14,182	10
ROCKWALL	194,432	92
RUNNELS	2,361	2
RUSK	55,610	11
SABINE	-794	-1
SAN AUGUSTINE	4,923	6
SAN JACINTO	42,194	51
SAN PATRICIO	140,685	27
SAN SABA	3,756	5
SCHLEICHER	1,264	4
SCURRY	-450	-0
SHACKELFORD	2,174	4
SHELBY	22,067	9
SHERMAN	574	1
SMITH	-79,224	-3
SOMERVELL	-124,075	-64
STARR	-1,359	-1
STEPHENS	-5,151	-4
STERLING	-991	-6
STONEWALL	978	3
SUTTON	-2,643	-4
SWISHER	3,171	3
TARRANT	1,737,302	11
TAYLOR	-74,977	-4
TERRELL	-774	-3
TERRY	-1,050	-1
THROCKMORTON	831	3
TITUS	-42,753	-13
TOM GREEN	-17,435	-1
TRAVIS	-1,054,252	-11
TRINITY	16,970	17
TYLER	58,587	37
UPSHER	115,347	48
UPTON	-151	-0
UVALDE	2,992	1
VAL VERDE	-4,025	-1
VAN ZANDT	131,102	39
VICTORIA	69,824	7
WALKER	14,505	3
WALLER	58,948	28
WARD	4,341	2
WASHINGTON	4,861	1
WEBB	-26,520	-3
WHARTON	40,290	9
WHEELER	-1,629	-2
WICHITA	-82,095	-4
WILBARGER	-13,221	-6
WILLACY	8,339	7
WILLIAMSON	607,751	64
WILSON	79,365	59
WINKLER	5,267	5
WISE	101,030	31
WOOD	34,364	11
YOAKUM	-5,708	-4
YOUNG	3,637	1
ZAPATA	203	0
ZAVALA	-155	-0

*Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce, data for 1986.

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